

the British Empire actually comprises only a little less than one-fifth of the land surface of the globe.

This immense area is inhabited by rather more than one-fifth "the whole estimated population of the world.

The Ocean Empire.

In addition to its remarkable size and vast population the Empire has another special characteristic which we should observe with attention.

It is sometimes called *An Oceanic Empire*, and there is, perhaps, no single phrase which expresses so well the most marked point of difference between it and other large States. All the great oceans wash its shores. Water, more than land, forms its boundaries, and the sea is the chief means of connection between its different parts. A larger proportion of its people finds employment on the sea than is the case in other countries. The ocean trade of its people is greater than that of any nation of present or past times. British ships not only carry British commerce, but also a large part of the merchandise exchanged between other countries. We are almost as much interested in keeping safe the great ocean highways over which these ships pass as in guarding the streets of our cities in which traffic is daily going on.

We see, therefore, that the expression "oceanic" means a great deal when applied to the British Empire. Indeed, the greatness and prosperity of the State to which we belong seem to depend as much upon our connection with the sea as upon the extensive possessions of land of which we have spoken. It is impossible to understand